

Food Notes | The Newsletter of Food for People The Food Bank of Humboldt County

FALL ISSUE 2019



Food for People's seasonal Free Produce Markets, distribute fresh produce at four countywide locations with the help of hard working volunteers.

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Bank for Humboldt County

contact us and have your name removed from our newsletter mailing list.

Notes from the Director

Our 40th Anniversary

By Anne Holcomb, Executive Director

Did you know that 2019 marks Food for People's 40th year of service to Humboldt County? We've come a long way from our roots as a small food closet serving a handful of households in 1979 to reaching 12,000 individuals a month through a network of 18 programs. Every step we've taken over the past four decades has been driven by a community committed to making sure none of their friends and neighbors go hungry.

Food for People grew from the compassion and determination of a small group of local residents who decided it was time to do something about hunger and food insecurity in Humboldt County. The local economy was feeling the impact of a decline in good paying jobs in the timber and fishing industries, and when those jobs started to disappear, there weren't others that paid as well to replace them. It was tough for folks to find work and many families had to ask for help for the first time in their lives. That scenario became the genesis of Food for People.

The initial group referred to itself as the Food Rights Action Project (FRAP) which later evolved into Food for People. This inspired group mobilized to research government food programs, funding opportunities and local food donation options. They became affiliated with the USDA Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) that provided access to USDA commodity foods and some funding for distribution and storage. I'm sure a few of you will remember the bricks of bright orange cheese, one pound blocks of butter, bags of non-fat dried milk, dried beans, cans of lard, canned meats and vegetables that were the staples of a food box in those days. The group also initiated gleaning activities at local farms and in backyard gardens, and started collecting donations of expired or close-to-pull-date items from grocery stores.

As the organization took shape, driven mostly by volunteers, it secured a small 1,000 square foot residence on V Street in Eureka that became the center of operations for several years. They utilized borrowed warehouse space at various sites around town for dry goods, along with storage units that were placed in the backyard. The space was so cramped that clients often had to wait outside in the rain. By the mid-nineties, it had become clear that more space was needed and the group applied for a CDBG grant and initiated a Harvest Home capital campaign to purchase and retrofit the facility we now call home.

Fast forward to today and we see many of the same economic challenges that have defined Humboldt County for decades. We have a high cost of living, especially for housing,



Anne Holcomb,

many local businesses. We know that but it's hard to know how soon.

The good news is that our program has become much more robust over the years and we can respond as needs change—thanks to the support invested in our work through your donations and resources, and it has made a difference.

So what's next? That's hard to predict. Things are moving rapidly around us and we're not sure how climate change, our economy, and the impact of poverty and hunger will impact our work. We've outgrown our current space and need to keep functioning as efficiently as possible so that we will be prepared to meet the challenges. We're working on that and will share details in the months to come.

The one constant over the years has been caring people like you who are committed to the work needed. You have been and will always be a valuable resource. Thank you!

With gratitude,

Anne Holcomb

Executive Director

aholcomb@foodforpeople.org



In July of this year alone, Food for People served more than 6,000 lunches to children through its f

Children's Free Summer Lunch

Local Partners Make Program Possible

By Carrie Smith, Child Nutrition Programs Coordinator

Summer can be the hungriest time of year for many children from low-income families. The hunger experienced during these months can have far-reaching consequences that last well beyond the end of the season, affecting a child's academic achievement, brain development, and overall health. For more than 20 years, Food for People has sponsored the federally-funded Children's Summer Lunch Program, which was created to connect kids from low-income families to the critical nutrition they need during the summer.

Because this program is federally funded, it comes with strict regulations. Children must come to a site at specific times, they must eat on site, and they can't take any food home with them if they don't finish. These restrictions mean that we are only able to feed a fraction of the children who are food insecure during the summer months. In some places, these strict requirements work well; kids gather to eat healthy meals in safe, interactive environments. These one-size-fits-all regulations, however, make it extremely difficult to reach most hungry children.

operate during the summer. Without can be challenging and dangerous for sites.

To reach a greater number of have had to become creative. Food f the relationships we have built throu to ensure meals arrive at the 18 site in Willow Creek, Hoopa, Eureka, Ma Fortuna, Rio Dell, and McKinleyville. efforts to connect kids to summer n transportation space provided by th Authority Bus system and UPS, ensu of the sites and hungry children who areas. We are also lucky to have year recreation programs, Boys and Girls youth centers that provide activities meet.

We are grateful for our dedic the program thrive! In July alone, we



In the last few years, Food for People's Local Store Food Recovery Program has saved local businesses up to \$40,000 in annual waste fees.

Food Waste Reduction

Food for People Partners on CalRecycle Grant

By Carly Robbins, Development Director

Food waste is an important issue facing the country. Forty percent of food produced in the United States goes to waste, either ending up in a landfill or left to rot in the field. Yet, 40 million Americans struggle with hunger, according to Feeding America. With greenhouse gas emissions being a major environmental concern and hunger an increasing issue for many community members, now is the time to act. This is why Food for People recently partnered with the cities of Arcata and Eureka, and Humboldt State University on a grant proposal to reduce food waste in Humboldt County.

In May of this year, a grand total of \$163,657 was awarded to the group, part of a \$11 million distribution by CalRecycle to 36 entities through its Food Waste Prevention and Rescue Grant Program. The goal of this program is to reduce food waste and help feed food-insecure Californians.

"Edible food disposal is a humanitarian tragedy and a tremendous waste of California's resources," CalRecycle Director Scott Smithline said in a statement. "These local food waste prevention and rescue programs make our communities healthier and help California combat climate change."

Food for People already works with local grocery, pharmacy, health food stores, and wholesalers and producers, to divert food to us that would otherwise go to waste. As part

brought between **336,000 and 1,000,000 pounds of food** to the food bank annually, **saving up to \$40,000 in annual waste fees**.

The purpose of the funds will be to help educate the public about new ways to reduce food waste, to minimize the amount of food going to landfills, and divert edible food currently going to waste. Food rescue efforts will be expanded to the food service industry, local institutions, and businesses that do not currently donate excess food. The grant will fund general and targeted education and outreach, on engagement, expanded cold storage, and food donation pickups and distribution.

At Food for People's Choice, we are investing in energy-efficient refrigeration and equipment. Not only will the equipment emit less greenhouse gas, but food that will go to waste as people can deliver what they would like without letting out. We are working with a newly-hired staff member to take the lead in contacting and asking businesses to donate edible food to the Food Bank.

Food waste and food insecurity are two of the biggest issues to tackle. We are excited by



Wild R

Local Farm Spotlight

Wild Rose Farm

By Allison Kenney, Local Food Resources Coordinator

Wild Rose Farm is a certified organic farm situated on West End road between Arcata and Blue Lake. The farm is currently made up of 100 acres, a number which is always evolving, and in the past has encompassed plots of land in Loleta and Ferndale. In Blue Lake, the mild coastal climate and water from the nearby Mad River offer ideal growing conditions for the farm's main crops: beets, potatoes, spinach, chard, kale, cilantro, Brussels sprouts, and perhaps the most notable: quinoa. These crops are grown using very little irrigation; in fact, most of the crops grown at Wild Rose are completely dry-farmed. I got to interview the owner and head-farmer, Blake Richard, one of the most candid, humble individuals I've encountered.

Blake started farming in the 1980s under a local farmer named Dennis Potter. He describes Humboldt's food scene back then as much different from today, a time before the small farm movement, when most of today's local farms had yet to exist. He eventually rented land and started his own operation, Wild Rose Farm. Over the past decades he has employed many different people, with Blake serving as a mentor, and Wild Rose as an incubator. Many have since gone on to start their own farms—Ben Perone from Rain Frog Farm, John Severn from Little River Farm, Graham Gagne from Green Spiral Farm, and Ben Thompson from Fair Curve Farm, to name a few.

in the past he was farming as much as . . . is most known for its local production . . . originally grown in South America, quinoa . . . Pacific Northwest, where cooler temperatures . . . set seed, and Humboldt's long dry summer . . . conditions. Blake sells his quinoa locally . . . op and at farmers markets. He also sells . . . which markets to grocery stores like . . . American-grown, organic quinoa to com

Through speaking with Blake, it is . . . thinking, calculating, and striving to evol . . . He's also introspective about the scale . . . and the methods and resources neces . . . larger scale feasible. "I hate equipment . . . Blake- but at this point, and at his farm . . . necessary evil. Over the last few years . . . with organic no-till methods, relativ . . . especially for organic vegetable farms . . . that at a time when global warming, . . . degenerative farming is on the rise, it's t . . . do things: one that uses fewer resource

Blake has been donating to Fo . . . program for more than 10 years and is . . . farm donors. He has donated more than . . . over the past decade. We also purchas



Food for People
The Food Bank for
Humboldt County

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Farmers' Market-Style Summer Produce Distributions

By Arianne Aryanpur, Development & Communications Specialist

Every third Thursday from May through October, Food for People's parking lot transforms into a bustling farmers' market-style event, with tables lined with fresh produce, a booth for recipe tasting, and live music.

The Free Produce Markets—offered monthly at four locations—are designed to bring fruits and vegetables to hundreds of children, families, and seniors in Humboldt County who might not otherwise have access to the fresh produce needed for good health.

They also support our ongoing efforts to make farmers' market-style produce shopping available to everyone, including people receiving nutritional assistance.

No registration is necessary for the outdoor distributions, which are offered in Eureka, Fortuna, Redway, and Garberville. Participants can simply show up on distribution day to select from a variety of fresh, seasonal produce provided by the California Association of Food Banks' Farm to Family program and California Emergency Foodlink's Donate Don't Dump program. Additional support is provided through a Care for the Poor grant from St. Joseph Health.

Sometimes there is produce that people may not have heard of or don't use often. To get people excited about trying new foods, we provide food samples and recipes to encourage people to eat healthy and try new foods. At a recent produce market in Eureka, where plums and zucchini were available, Nutrition Education Coordinator Kayla Watkins handed out zucchini plum skewers drizzled in a balsamic reduction.

In addition to receiving recipe ideas, people can meet with outreach specialists to learn about CalFresh and other benefits. Local social service groups also participate. At a recent Eureka market, Smile Humboldt handed out oral hygiene items—including toothbrushes, toothpaste, and pamphlets—to encourage healthy dental habits.

Our produce markets wouldn't be possible without the help of our amazing volunteers, who help stock tables, break-down boxes, and distribute food. Interested in helping? Please email volunteer@foodforpeople.org or visit foodforpeople.org/volunteering.



Photo captions: Local musician Dale Winget serenades the

Advocacy Corner

Proposed SNAP Changes to Increase Hunger

By Heidi McHugh, Community Education & Outreach Coordinator

On July 23, 2019 a Federal rule was proposed which will deny Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, known as CalFresh in California) benefits to an estimated 3 million individual Americans, including more than 120,000 California households. The impact of this proposed rule is worth understanding, and we will walk through examples that put it in local context.

This proposed change is based on the Federal Poverty Line (FPL) that is used to determine eligibility for federal programs. A family of four with two working parents and two children at 100% FPL earns \$25,750 annually. SNAP eligibility is based upon earnings at 130% FPL or under; \$33,600 or under for our family of four. The Self-Sufficiency Standard determines the amount of income required for working families to meet basic needs at a minimally adequate level, taking into account family composition, ages of children, and geographic differences in costs. This same family of four would need to earn a minimum of \$62,331 to be self-sufficient in Eureka, Ca; a difference of \$28,731 between qualifying for nutrition assistance from SNAP and self-sufficiency. In Humboldt County 57% of all households earn less than \$49,000. Personally, I have spoken to many people who access Food for People's programs that are frustrated they cannot afford to put food on their tables yet do not qualify for SNAP.

Broad Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) is an option offered to states by the federal government. According to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities "BBCE enables states to raise SNAP income limits somewhat so that many low-income working families that have difficulty making ends meet, such as because they face costly housing or child care expenses that consume a sizable amount of income, can receive help affording adequate food. This policy also lets states adopt less restrictive asset tests so that families, seniors, and people with a disability can have modest savings without losing SNAP." Forty states, including California, currently use BBCE that allows households to receive SNAP if their income is below 200% FPL (\$51,504 or under for a family of four) as long as they meet other eligibility criteria (simply earning less than 200% FPL does not guarantee qualification for SNAP). The proposed rule change announced in July would eliminate BBCE through executive action. Michigan Senator Debbie Stabenow, a member of the Senate Agricultural Committee that is pivotal in shaping SNAP policy through the Farm Bill reauthorization, said what this action does is "circumvent Congress and make harmful changes to nutrition assistance that have been repeatedly rejected on a bipartisan basis."

This proposal has SNAP recipients and advocates concerned for many reasons. The estimated 120,000 California households that would lose benefits may spike with the rise in

off of benefits as their incomes on eligibility-based programs are caps, and this can influence the or promotion, because they will benefits. BBCE also simplifies the county agencies, because eligibility analyze assets under a certain limit bouncing on and off of benefits if t

For food banks like Food for federal nutrition benefits away from impact our ability to provide for increases. Bread for the World, a faith to end hunger, says that for one charitable organization, 19 bags of federal programs. Cutting federal hunger away; it sends more people banks across the country are already cannot fill in this gap.

"The estimated 120,000 C households that would lo may spike with the rise in wage, pushing more peo what is known as the 'ben

As it is, 44% of the households are receiving SNAP benefits; a ref benefit amounts.

In addition to increased hun impacted by a reduction of SNAP don't have money to replace the grocers, retailers, and farmers' ma the business. The USDA Economic that the federal dollars from SNA California's economy in 2016.

Of greater concern than ec in hunger. SNAP keeps people he particularly vulnerable to the effe higher rates of hospitalization, in delays in cognitive development, insecurity. More than 74% of Calif children.

A public comment period fo by federal law. To have your voi

By Carrie Smith, Child Nutrition Programs Coordinator

This last year we sent out a survey to participating kids in

Applications for the backpacks will be distributed the first week of the next few weeks at participating locations. We are currently sponsoring one bag of food for orphans. The cost of the bag is \$300. Please contact Carrie Smith at carrie.smith@fcs.org for more information.

Volunteer Spotlight - Gleaning

Harvesting excess produce for the Food Bank

What do you like about gleaning with Food for People?



"For me, it is a good way to get to know the community members who are donating, and to gain inspiration and ideas for my personal garden at home."

– Judy



"I get to help the food bank and community, while exposing my baby to the sights and smells of the garden."

– Katrina with baby Myko in tow



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GLEANNING VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Want to help harvest fruits and veggies from farms and backyard fruit trees? Scheduling is flexible and some projects can be done on your own time. The busiest time is now, but the gleaning season continues into November. If you're interested in finding out more or getting involved, contact our Local Food Resources Coordinator Allison Kenney at gleaning@foodforpeople.org, or (707) 445-3166 ext. 312.

Thank You for Voting Us

"Best Local Non-Profit" and "Best Volunteer Orga

in the North Coast Journal's 2018 Best of Humboldt contest!

Autumn Fruits and Vegetables

Beet, Apple, and Carrot Salad

By Kayla Watkins

With summer coming to a close and autumn approaching, we start seeing rich root vegetables and orchard fruits at the food bank. Autumn brings the chance to enhance our plate with raw, nutrient-dense foods. As Food for People's Nutrition Education Coordinator, I have the opportunity to use these seasonal gems in recipes for our program participants.

One of my favorite recipes is Beet, Apple, and Carrot Salad. The base ingredients are apples, beets, and carrots, all shredded. With this pairing, there are endless possibilities. I even paired coleslaw with pulled pork sandwiches, a perfect summer BBQ option. My favorite part about this recipe is the concept. You can choose almost any three items to serve as your base, increasing the nutrient content in your meal.

At Food for People, we work hard to emphasize healthy, nutritious foods. However, for many people visiting our Choice Pantry in Eureka, some produce can be unfamiliar. A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to demonstrate making shredded beet, apple and carrot salad in our pantry. You could feel the excitement in the air, and the smiles on people's faces. As I walked out with each sample tray, I noticed people whispering to each other about how delicious the food looked. One shopper was overjoyed to find a meal that contained the ingredients she was shopping for at that moment. Not only was the meal quite delicious, it was wonderfully balanced. Try it yourself!



Paired with sandwiches made from USDA products, Carrot Coleslaw makes a filling summer meal.

SHREDDED BEET APPLE & CARROT SALAD

Ingredients:

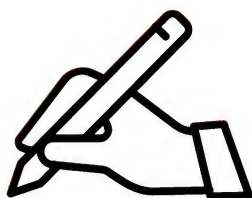
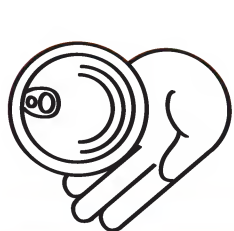
- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| - 2 medium beets, peeled and grated | 1/2 cup chopped cilantro |
| 1 large, firm, tart apple with peel, grated | 3 tablespoons cider vinegar |
| 2 large carrots, peeled and grated | 3 tablespoons olive oil |
| 4 scallions, green and white parts, | Salt and pepper, to taste |

Directions:

1. Combine the beets, apple, and carrots with the cilantro in a bowl, and toss to mix.
2. Whisk together the vinegar and oil, then pour over the mixture, stir well. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

September is Hunger Action

You can make a difference in local hunger



Hunger affects far too many children, seniors, and families in Humboldt County.

Twenty-one percent of our county lives at or below the poverty line and the number of those affected by poverty and hunger is increasing in rural areas.

Hunger affects work, mood, and health. In our community, hunger is a daily experience for many people. Food for People has been working for 40 years to eliminate hunger and address the root causes of hunger and poor nutrition. To raise awareness of this huge national issue, Food for People is asking you to get involved and help make an impact this September during Hunger Action Month. It's a month to spread the word, take action on the hunger crisis, and dedicate ourselves to a solution. Whether it's by advocating, giving, volunteering, or taking action, you

Give. Food for People needs your contributions to sustain our hunger relief programs. Your donations help provide food for over 100 people each month who struggle with food insecurity in Humboldt.

Volunteer. Volunteer your time at Food for People. It takes a community to make our programs successful. Join our monthly 2nd Saturday Volunteer Dinner on September 10th at volunteer@foodforpeople.org.

Educate. Educate yourself and others about hunger and its effects. Follow Food for People on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, or sign up for our newsletter for updates on our programs and how you can help fight hunger locally.

Advocate. Contact your local or national legislators about issues related to poverty. See our Advocacy Corner for more information.

Donate. Pick up a few extra pounds of food or bring in excess harvest from your garden.